agriculture is possible. The Qandahari herders, meanwhile, were driven away from the banks of the Amu, which were taken over for agricultural purposes. Colonisation and irrigation benefited the Pashtuns at the expense of the indigenous groups, and agriculture at the expense of animal-breeding. This was in fact the political aim of the Afghan authorities.

Politics

Although some ethnic groups in the region, such as the Baluchis for example, have been totally assimilated linguistically, and although ways of life tend to become homogeneous, the sense of identity, of belonging to a community distinct from other communities, is still acute, and is perpetuated by marriage choices and the use of ethnonyms. In politics opposition between neighbouring communities is the logic underlying the alliances and conflicts between the leaders.

In 1969, during the Parliamentary elections in Rustaq, the Uzbeks, Qarluqs and Baluchis had only one candidate, a Baluchi, competing against the Tajiks and their Hazara allies; he very nearly won, but the Tajiks employed a more up-to-date strategy. The Uzbeks and Qarluqs relied on their traditional ethnic and tribal patronage system, whereby arbābs, the petty chiefs of villages and tribes, make their clans vote according to kinship criteria. The Tajiks, on the other hand, managed to offer economic benefits, in the form of presents to prominent people, and thus attract minorities. Chief among these were the Moghols, who, despite sharing their language with the Uzbeks and occupying the same terrain, were anxious to mark their difference from the latter, and hence an easy prey for the Tajiks.

Under the Communist government (1978–92), political affiliations largely followed ethnic lines:

- The Qarluqs of Rustaq chose either the Kabul camp or Hekmatyar's Islamists, following the logic of opposition to the Tajik majority, who joined the Jamiat movement of the commander Massoud.
- The situation of the Pashtuns of Yangi Qala was played out on two levels, political and ethnic. The majority sided with the Mujahidin (Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Islami and Sayyaf's Ettehad-e Islami);[6] others were chased off their land by Tajiks and Uzbeks who took advantage of weak central power to try to regain the lands taken from them by the Pashtun powers in Kabul.

Within the Resistance, alliances and divisions worked in the same way. Since the Tajiks of Badakhshan, with the exception of the Ismailis (Emadi 1993), and of Qataghan rallied to Massoud and the Jamiat, the other ethnic groups affiliated themselves with other parties. The Tajiks' closest neighbours, the Moghols of Argu (south of Faizabad) and the Uzbeks of Aliabad, joined the Hezb-e Islami. Sayyaf and his Ettehad-e Islami had, and still have, supporters among the Pashtuns. Since the capture of Khwoja-e Ghar by Massoud in 1991, the region of Yangi Qala has been controlled by the Jamiat (1993).

For both Uzbeks and Tajiks, 'national' identity and the feeling of belonging to an ethnic group in the broad sense have probably emerged reinforced from the conflict. Over and above partisan-ethnic fragmentation, the aspiration to belong to a larger community is making itself felt. The rejection of Pashtun domination and the nationality policies of the Communist government have played their part in this process. In the north and north-west of Afghanistan, General Dostom symbolises for many Turcophones the aspirations of the Uzbek nation; the Uzbek and Moghol officers of the Hezb-e Islami, though ostensibly supporters of Hekmatyar, still take General Dostom as their authority.

Let us conclude by returning to the question of identity. Though it may be correct that the term Tajik is often a self-designation and a word used to claim membership of a nationality, it should be pointed out that Tajik ethnicity, in the sense of a clear, stable, indisputable sense of belonging, is less prominent than Uzbek or Turkmen ethnicity. In practice, those whom we describe as Tajiks often call themselves by regional names – Panshiri, Darwazi, Rāghi (Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988c).

The Uzbeks have an ethnic history; they can be identified and recognise themselves in identities which are fairly substantial, evoking a precise origin and an etymology which, while perhaps mythical, still has some foundation and is drawn from an eponymous ancestor. The case of the Tajiks, on the other hand, is much more ambiguous. Tajik national identity lacks clarity. The obscurity of the term's origin is one indicator, among others (see Dupree 1978 and Orywal 1986, p. 22). *Tāz* or *Tāt*, indeed, seems to have been a term for 'Arab' in the Sassanid period, used by Iranians to designate the Arabs living in Iran, right up to Islamic times. Others take it to be a term used by the Arabs just after their conquest of Central Asia to designate the Persian-speakers there, as opposed to the Turkic-speakers. It may then have been used by the Turcophones to mean the Muslims of Central Asia,

and after their own conversion to Islam, the name *Tāzik* may have referred to the Iranian-speaking sedentary population, in other words the section of the population which had not been Turkicised.

This process of designating others by the absence of a characteristic is similar to that which one sees today in many areas of Afghanistan, where *Tāzik* is used by the Pashtuns to mean non-Pashtuns, whether they are Persian-speakers or not. The case of Afghanistan is useful in showing that the term can have a great variety of referents, often groups which lack a positive identity, and is devoid of almost any ethnic significance (Centlivres 1976b). The ethnonym *Tāzik* has therefore, for better or worse, been constructed around a label attached to a variety of peoples. It would appear that in Afghanistan the term has historically been used, and in some cases still is being used, to designate diverse populations which do not belong to the (usually dominant) group of the speaker. The awakening of nationalities in Afghanistan and the situation in Tajikistan show that this state of affairs has not yet changed completely.

Notes

1 The Panj takes the name of Amu after its confluence with the River Vakhsh.
2 'Desert of the Qipchaqs', the region north of the Caspian Sea, around the lower Volga, where the Golden Horde, the western most khanate of the Mongol empire, established itself after the death of Genghis Khan.
3 The Basmachis were Muslim guerillas who resisted the Soviet Revolution in Central Asia in the 1920s and 1930s.
4 A Muhajir is one who voluntarily goes into exile, especially for religious reasons, when the regime in power does not allow the free practice of Islam.
5 Between 1966 and 1974, we undertook several research trips to the north-east, north and north-west of Afghanistan (Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1977 and 1988a). Our research was primarily concerned with ethnic identity and inter-ethnic relations; it was made possible thanks to financial aid from the Swiss National Foundation for Scientific Research.
6 The seven Afghan resistance parties recognised by the government of Pakistan largely follow two tendencies: 'moderate' and 'Islamic'. The parties of G. Hekmatyar and Sayyaf belong to the second tendency.

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TAJIKISTAN: THE TRIALS OF INDEPENDENCE

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Chapter 1

Tajikistan and Afghanistan: The Ethnic Groups on Either Side of the Border

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Tajikistan

The Republic of Tajikistan, established in 1929 on the territory of the former Autonomous Republic of the same name, partially corresponds to the eastern part of the old Emirate of Bukhara; the Emirate also included parts of Turkestan and Badakhshan which are today in Afghanistan (Becker 1968). It was barely 100 years ago, in 1895, that the borders were firmly established between the Emirate, which had become a Russian protectorate, and the Afghanistan of Abdur Rahman, which was under the supervision of British India. The populations of the north-east of Afghanistan and the south of Tajikistan can therefore be considered as one large group which has evolved differently on either side of the border because of different ethnic policies and socio-economic development.

In presenting this study of the peoples of Tajikistan, we have concentrated on the works of Soviet ethnographers, especially B. Kh. Karmysheva; on the *Atlas of the Peoples of the World* of 1964, and on the ethnographic maps in the *Atlas of the Tajik SSR* (1968). It should be noted, however, that ethnographic maps can only give a flat representation of very heterogeneous and complicated realities, and reveal nothing of the dynamism of the various ethnic communities (Centlivres 1979). Ethnic groups are not natural objects but elaborate constructions modelled by the course of history, to which intellectuals, ethnologists, linguists and others occasionally contribute.

In 1895 Abdur Rahman, the Emir of Kabul, had to concede the right bank of the River Panj, which was to become the province of Gorny ('Mountain') Badakhshan, to the Emir of Bukhara, keeping the left bank as part of Afghanistan. The Darya-ye Panj thus became a state border for the first time.[1] Had the balance of power between the

regional players been different, the border could have been the River Kokcha, as it was more than 2,000 years ago between Sogdiana and Bactria.

The ethnic distribution in southern Tajikistan is affected by the area's division into several valleys, running from the north-east to the south-west, which carry the tributaries of the Panj and later the Amu.

1. The Soviet *Atlas of Tajikistan* (1968) contains an ethnic map which shows twelve groups, as follows:
   - five groups speaking Turkic languages: Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, Turkmen and Tatars;
   - six groups speaking Indo-European languages: Tajiks, Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, Gypsies and the so-called Central Asian Jews;
   - a group formed by several non-Arabic-speaking Arab communities which live in the villages along the Afghan border, in the south-west of the country, in an area which is otherwise Turcophone.

As might be expected, their geo-ecological distribution is to some extent similar to that in north-eastern Afghanistan. The Tajiks, a common term for Persian-speaking populations of diverse origin, live partly in villages in the high valleys and partly in towns; the people called by cartographers and ethnologists Pamiris or Mountain Tajiks, the Galchas of ancient times, inhabit the mountainous Autonomous Province of Gorny Badakhshan in the south-east, where there are also encampments of Kyrgyz. The Uzbeks, according to the 1968 *Atlas*, live along the lower reaches of the valleys in the south-west of Tajikistan and close to the border with Uzbekistan. Still in the southern half of the country, the Uzbeks are predominant around Shaartuz, Regar, Kurgan-Tyube, Panj and Kulyab, and to the south of Dushanbe. German settlers are mentioned in Dushanbe and around Vakhsh, along the lower reaches of the river of that name. Russians figure on the map as isolated points, particularly in the towns – except to the east of Khojent, where their presence is given as massive – and in the Vakhsh Valley and Kulyab. Kazakhs can be found along the border with Afghanistan in the south-west; Turkmen in lower Kafirnigan.

2. The ethnic map in the *Atlas of the Peoples of the World* (*Atlas Narodov Mira*), which appeared a few years earlier in 1964, enumerates nineteen ethnic groups for Tajikistan. This is because it

lists as separate entities six populations which are, often disputably, known as Mountain Tajiks. This purely geographic title corresponds neither to a real ethnic unit, nor to an indigenous appellation. The six groups are Ismaili Muslims who live in Gorny Badakhshan and speak East Iranian languages. They call themselves by names derived from their places of origin. Four of them, the Rushanis, Shughnanis, Ishkashimis and Wakhis, are also to be found in north-eastern Afghanistan. A residual group from the Hissar region, the Yagnobis, now displaced and assimilated, is also mentioned in this map.

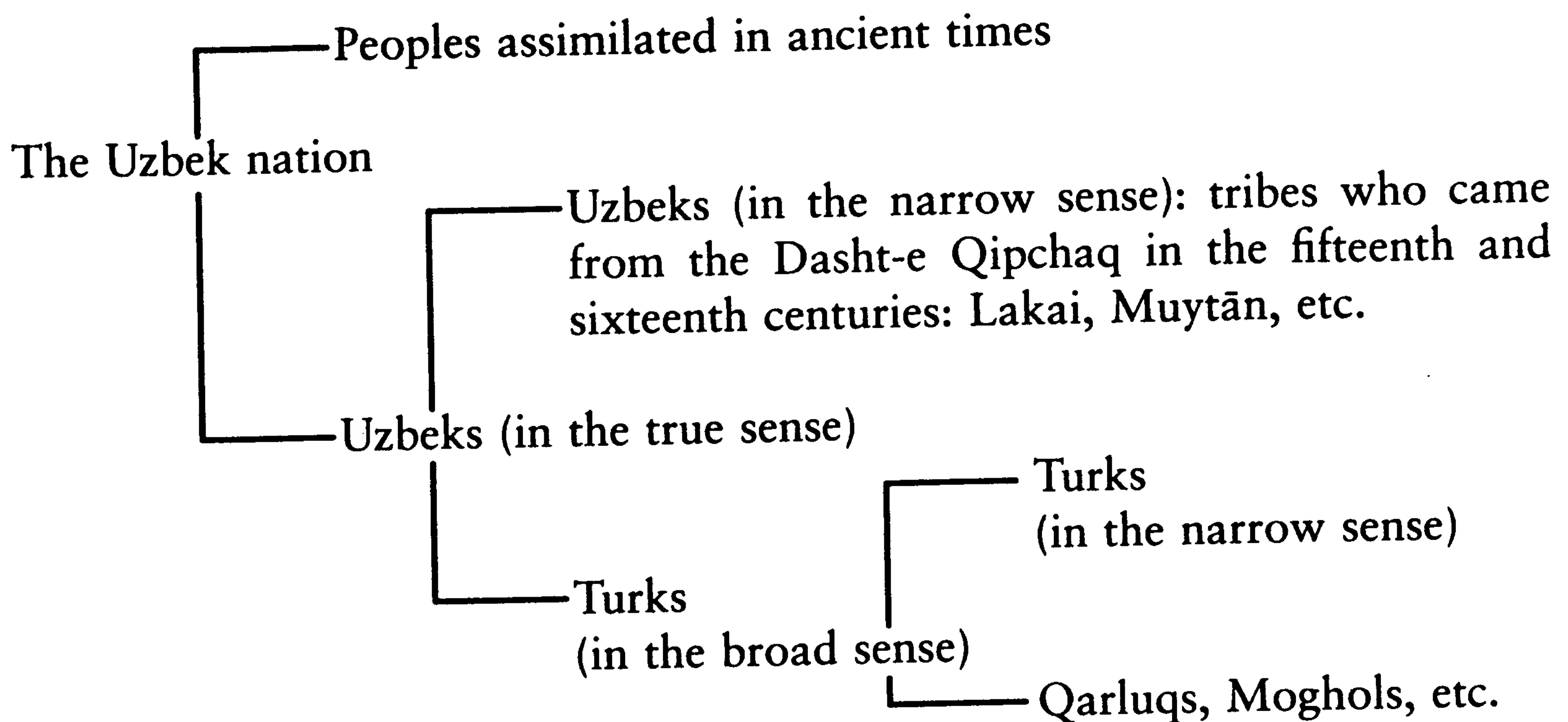
In any case, these twelve or nineteen ethnic groups seem few in comparison to the 57 ethnic groups of Afghanistan which figure in the Tübingen *Atlas* (Orywal 1983). Limiting ourselves to the Afghan north, there appears to be far greater ethnic splintering to the south than to the north of the Amu Darya. This is because Soviet ethnographers, in conformity with the theory and ideology of the nation-building process, gathered several groups together under the names of Tajik and Uzbek, and treated them as homogeneous entities. The Communist conception of nations and nationalities rested on the hypothesis that ethnic minorities and marginal groups would move closer to, and eventually merge with, the ethnic groups chosen to form the Uzbek and Tajik nations. Soviet cartographers and ethnographers thus reduced and integrated Persian- or Iranian-speaking groups into the bosom of the Tajik whole, and Turkic-speakers into the Uzbek whole. But the works of these ethnographers still contain traces and descriptions of numerous groups of Turkic-speakers who are distinct from the ethnic Uzbeks of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. They have been described and explained in greater detail than those of Afghanistan, but the same Turkic-speaking groups, often assimilated with Uzbeks by outsiders but distinguished by the populations themselves, can be found on both sides of the border.

Let us consider the Turcophone population. Soviet ethnologists see two main components in the Uzbek whole (Karmysheva 1960 and 1964):

a) The first is composed of Turcophones who have over a long period of time adopted an agricultural and urban way of life; a sedentary people without tribal divisions. In the old Emirate they were called Sarts, Tats or even Tajiks, regardless of the language they spoke.
b) The second consists of groups who have kept the name and sometimes the subdivisions of their tribe. At the beginning of this

century, they were still cattle-breeders and often semi-nomadic; others pursued a pastoral agricultural lifestyle similar to that of the Persian-speakers of the mountain regions.

The classification of the second component is still relevant today.



The first category in this second component consists of the Uzbeks in the narrow sense, who emerged in the *Dasht-e Qipchaq*[2] in about the fourteenth century and migrated to Transoxiana in the sixteenth century under the leadership of Mohammad Shaybani Khan (1500–10). These Uzbeks assert membership of a particular tribe (e.g., the Ming, Kungrad, Lakai, Muytān, Mangit or Qataghan), sometimes even of a tribal subdivision. The Qataghan, in particular, gave its name to an erstwhile province of Afghanistan (Centlivres 1975). Since the eighteenth century at least, forced migrations have accelerated the dispersion of the Uzbek tribes on both banks of the Amu Darya. The last but one major migration on both sides of the Panj-Amu took place after the *Basmachi* uprising in the 1920s and the forced collectivisations of the early 1930s.[3] A significant number of the *Muhajir* at that time were Turkmen and Uzbeks, among the latter thousands of Kungrad and Lakai from Transoxiana (Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1988b).[4] Some of their descendants are currently (1994) living in Pakistani Baluchistan, some of them at least waiting to return to northern Afghanistan.

The second category comprises the Turcophone peoples who were already living in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan before the arrival of Shaybani's Uzbek tribes. They have preserved their own identity, the names of their groups, their habitat and their dialects.

They are to be found on both sides of the border. Their neighbours often call them Turks; however, the ethnonym Turk is only adopted by some of these people; the others call themselves names which evoke the Turco-Mongol invasions of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. The best-known groups are the Qarluqs, who live near the River Kokcha in Afghanistan – where we studied them around Rustaq in the 1970s – as well as in the Zarafshan Valley in the north of Tajikistan, and in the southern part of the Republic. Some Afghan Qarluqs fled Afghanistan at the time of Abdur Rahman to establish themselves around Kulyab. Another group, the Moghols, live around Taliqan and to the south of Faizabad in Afghanistan, and around Hissar and on the right bank of the Panj in Tajikistan. Established in Transoxiana during the time of Timur/Tamerlane (1336–1405), some of them removed to Afghanistan under pressure from Russia and Bukhara in the nineteenth century; they returned at the end of the century, but they or their children emigrated to Afghanistan again during the period of enforced collectivisation. This centuries-long, often tragic to-ing and fro-ing shows no sign of coming to an end. One could mention other groups here, too, such as the Barlas, who bear the name of a Mongol tribe.

The distinct identities of these Turks, in the broad sense, were and still are based on minor linguistic differences within the East Turkic group and on their geographical distribution at different levels in the landscape. They were displaced by the Shaibanid Uzbeks onto higher land: upstream and into the foothills, between the high mountain areas of the Tajiks and the plains where the Uzbeks raised cattle. A precise study of political affiliations and rebellions, from the Soviet Revolution and the Basmachi uprising to collectivisation, and on to the post-Soviet era, would probably reveal the role played by regional struggles in political alignments, which, as in Afghanistan, are influenced by ethnic and regional differences.

The North-East of Afghanistan

The north-east of Afghanistan comprises the provinces of Kunduz, Baghlan and Takhar, formerly collectively known as Qataghan, and the province of Badakhshan.[5] The region to the north and east of Faizabad is ethnically homogeneous, peopled by Tajiks, but this term covers a number of groups and self-designations; the Pamiri peoples are often classed separately, as we have seen, for linguistic and religious reasons. To the extreme north-east live the Pamir Kyrgyz. In

summer, the relative homogeneity of the region gives way to great ethnic plurality with the arrival of Arab, Uzbek, and Pashtun herders practising transhumance in the region of Ragh, Esh and Shewa. Qataghan and the banks of the Kokcha, on the other hand, have a very diverse population, which comprises communities of Dari-speakers (Tajiks, Hazaras and Baluchis), Turkic-speakers (Uzbeks, Moghols and Qarluqs), as well as strong Pashtun colonies, to mention only the principal groups.

While the north-east of Badakhshan and the high valleys of the Hindu Kush have retained an ethnic make-up similar to that which existed before the twentieth century, the foothills and loess hills harbour a chiefly Turcophone population pushed back by migrations onto the plains, and in this century by colonists who moved into the lands around Kunduz, Taliqan and Baghlan, and, further to the north-east, into the area next to the Amu Darya (Darkat, Dasht-i Qala, Yangi Qala). This new wave of migration was linked to the internal colonisation policy pursued by the Kabul government between 1920 and 1960, and the large-scale irrigation works that accompanied it; as a result unruly populations had to be settled, and a large area inhabited mainly by Uzbek herders had to be Pashtunised. These newly-colonised regions exhibit remarkable ethnic diversity, with Pashtuns predominating.

Let us take two examples: Rustaq District, situated among the loessial hills near the Kokcha, and Yangi Qala, further north, near the Panj. Both are in Takhar Province (Centlivres 1976a, Centlivres-Demont 1976).

Rustaq

Up to 1980, the Tajiks represented about a third of the 70 to 80,000 inhabitants of Rustaq District. Apart from an indigenous minority, their origins are varied: Badakhshan, Lower Qataghan, north of Kabul, the Kulyab region. They are merchants in the bazaar and farmers.

Under Babur (at the beginning of the sixteenth century), the Hazaras took up residence in the south of Rustaq, on the ravine-scarred slopes where they practise agriculture and pastoralism; there are not much more than 1,500 of them. Unlike the majority of Afghan Hazaras, those of Rustaq are Sunnis, and as such are traditionally and prudently allied to the Tajiks. The Baluchis (numbering about 10,000), who probably came from Badakhshan with the troops of

the Afghan Shah Ahmad in 1768, spread out from Kishm in Afghanistan to Kulyab in Tajikistan, and speak the languages of their Tajik and Uzbek neighbours. The Baluchis of Rustaq live in the lowest part of the district, along the river. The Turcophones are divided into two population groups, the Uzbeks and the Qarluqs, which are almost equal in number with 13,000 people in each. They occupy the loessial hills on the right bank of the Kokcha; formerly herders, they now practise dry cereal farming with a little sheep- and horse-breeding. They are the neighbours and allies of the Uzbeks who came as conquerors in the sixteenth century; the latter cultivate the irrigated lands in the valley. Rustaq is too far from the irrigated lands of Lower Qataghan and the large axes of communication to have been much disturbed by Pashtun colonisation.

The Tajiks and their Hazara allies somewhat outnumber the Turcophones, which makes the Baluchis the arbitrators in the equation. Settled in an Uzbek area, they side most often with the Uzbeks and Qarluqs, no doubt to resist assimilation or subordination by the Tajiks.

Yangi Qala

In contrast to the relatively stable situation in Rustaq, where each group occupies and controls a defined space, the district of Yangi Qala (which comprises the border localities of Darkat and Dasht-i Qala) on the bank of the Panj, is a mosaic of little groups of varied origin. In this fragmented and unstable ethnic configuration, alliances tend to be formed according to economic rather than ethnic interests: there is a perennial struggle for possession of irrigated lands.

From the 1920s, King Amanullah's governors undertook irrigation works and encouraged colonisation by non-native groups. The Qandaharis, sheep- and camel-breeding Pashto-speakers, arrived from the north-west of Afghanistan. They belonged to tribes that Abdur Rahman had hoped to settle in the north-west at the end of the nineteenth century. At the same time, cultivators began to arrive from the south, either voluntarily or as a result of deportation. These were Pashto-speaking tribesmen who had periodically rebelled against the power of Kabul, which now displaced them and turned them into government-sponsored colonists.

These newcomers clashed with the Uzbek herders and the Tajik, Qarluq and Moghol agriculturists, who were pushed out of the irrigated lands up towards the loess hills where only pluvial